

Written Testimony Submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly Joint  
Education and Appropriations Committees House Bill 6616: An Act  
Concerning Expansion of HUSKY Health Benefits to Those Ineligible Due to  
Immigration Status.

.

February 14, 2023

Co-Chairs Senator Lesser and Representative Gilchrist, Ranking Members  
Senator Seminara and Representative Case, and Distinguished Members of  
the Human Services Committee:

My name is Rev. Larissa Forsythe. I live in Glastonbury, Connecticut, and am  
the Associate Minister of Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, a  
founding member of Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA). **I  
am writing in support of House Bill 6616: An Act Concerning Expansion  
of HUSKY Health Benefits to Those Ineligible Due to Immigration  
Status.**

As a person who lives with chronic depression, I know how crucial accessible  
and affordable mental health care is. I also know firsthand that my well-being  
affects everyone around me. As a person of faith, I strongly believe that ALL  
people should have access to affordable mental health care - for their benefit  
and for the benefit of all of us.

According to NAMI-CT, of the 561,000 adults in Connecticut with a mental  
health condition, 160,000 went without needed care in the past year, and one-  
third of those who went without did so because of cost. Many of our  
neighbors in immigrant communities - including 56% of undocumented folks  
- are without health insurance. To make matters worse, being a member of a  
marginalized community increases a person's risk for mental health  
challenges due to the impacts of prejudice and systemic oppression.  
Meanwhile, our undocumented neighbors pay over \$187 million dollars in  
Connecticut taxes annually. It is morally reprehensible to leave our  
neighbors out in the cold, especially when extending HUSKY insurance  
coverage would represent only 3% of our state's annual Medicaid budget.  
Furthermore, the majority of those costs would be recouped through savings  
in emergency Medicare and uncompensated care.

This extension is an uncontroversial decision, supported by a majority of CT voters. 57% of voters support expanding HUSKY to all undocumented immigrants, including 84% of Democrats, 83% of Black voters, and 76% of Latinx voters.

I'm asking you to vote "YES" on HB 6616: An Act Concerning Expansion of HUSKY Health Benefits to Those Ineligible Due to Immigration Status.  
Thank you for your leadership in this crucial issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lucinda Dorn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Rev. Larissa Forsythe,  
108 Prospect St.  
Glastonbury, CT 06033